

Spiritual Intimacy With God

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Several years ago I was walking through a neighborhood development sale looking for some bargains. It was a lovely spring day. The birds were chirping and the flowers were blooming. As Solomon declared, “the time of the singing of the birds is come” (Song of Solomon 2:12). I can remember how one particular woman was doing some major house cleaning. She was actually selling her organ. The organ was sitting outside in the yard and to demonstrate that it was in good working condition she was playing the old-time favorite of many Christians:

“Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea.
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.”

As I walked through the development I could hear the lady playing this song over and over again. It must have been the only song she knew. Maybe this is why she was getting rid of the organ! Nevertheless this song struck a cord in my heart on this spring day. It

was a reminder that God was calling me to spiritual intimacy with Himself, a personal walk and relationship with Him.

Devotional living, worshipping God, and enjoying His abiding presence (John 15) are all part of developing this spiritual intimacy with God or a closer walk with the Lord in our daily living. Intimacy involves personal quiet times when we get alone with God (Ps. 5:1-3; 63:1), pray (Ps. 5:2), meditate upon God (Ps. 63:3) and His Word (Psalm 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148), and praise Him for who He is and what He has done for us (Ps. 145:3). It also involves an entire life of devotion, obedience, and worship that is rendered up to God as a New Testament priestly gift (1 Pet. 2:5). It involves enjoying God's presence on a daily and hourly basis (Psalm 37:4 – "Delight thyself also in the Lord"). It isn't enough just to start the day in meditation and prayer. We must seek to maintain this posture and continue to "abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1).

Practicing the presence of God! This is what God wants from our lives today as His people. When we practice the presence of God we will develop spiritual intimacy with Him. As a result, we will not become defeated, discouraged, and distraught in life. Many Christians wonder what went wrong when they find themselves

overcome by sin, debilitating fears, and discouragement. If they retrace their steps they will discover that they have not been walking with God, as they should be, and as a result they are overcome with life's perplexities and problems. James 4:8 reminds us to "draw nigh (near) to God and he will draw nigh to you." Paul expressed his desire for spiritual intimacy with God when he said, "That I may know him" (Phil. 3:10). A daily devotional life consisting of fellowship with God and worship is not something that can be overlooked or bypassed without having damaging and debilitating effects upon our Christian lives.

A small boy was very fond of his father and loved to join him wherever he went. One day while his dad was engaged in intensive study, the youngster tapped at his office door. "Well, my little man, what do you want now?" "Nothing, daddy, I just want to be near you." Receiving permission to come in, the boy made his way to a far corner of the room and sat quietly for a long time. He was content just to be alone with his father. Is this the kind of love we have toward God who is our heavenly Father? Do we often go to God, even when we don't want anything, so we can just be near Him and enjoy His presence? If we develop spiritual intimacy with the Lord we

will be greatly blessed and possess a life of spiritual richness and “joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8).